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August 27, 2013 In Support of Bills 4806-4809

My name is Janae Dean from Grand Rapids.
I am here today to state that I support House bills
4806-4809

My husband and I have 5 sons and a daughter and
I have been teaching children of all ages for over
30 years. I've taught at the inner city Potter's
House School in Grand Rapids for over 20 years.

In 1996 one of my students Saulo Montalvo, who
had just turned 16 years old was involved in a
terrible crime as the get away driver in a robbery
murder and an innocent man's life was taken. I
would like to read a letter from him.

And it reads:

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen,
Thank for allowing my teacher and friend to read
on my behalf

I was only one month into my 16th year when I
made a decision to go along with two other boys
and commit a terrible crime. I hid from them all
day to avoid the plan, but I eventually gave in and

went along. I was to stay in the car as the get away driver as the two boys I was with went into a party store, and robbed and killed an innocent man, Mr. Rodney Corp. There has not been a single day that has passed that I don't agonize over that fateful decision. I can't believe that I was part of something so evil that took a man's life. I will live with the guilt and shame for what I did for the rest of my days. Sentenced to life without parole, I am now 33 1/2 years old and I have had little hope of ever being released from prison. After 17 1/2 years behind bars I've had much time to think and reflect on my life and what I should have done differently as a teenage boy.

One of the first things I did in prison was to seek forgiveness from my Heavenly Father, my family, and my friends. I vowed to wake up everyday and be the best person I could be, to somehow try and give back to Mr. Corp and his family for what I had taken from them. In time I gained the courage to ask for forgiveness from the family of Mr. Corp. To my surprise they graciously granted me forgiveness, which was more important to me than my own freedom. Now I know that it is entirely possible that I will spend the rest of my life behind bars, a fate I know I deserve, but I pray

everyday that God would see fit to grant me mercy, and give me one more chance to make up for my mistakes. I put my trust in Him, for my life is in His hands.

This letter is not intended for me to try and gain my freedom, or for any underserved sympathy, but to say thank you to those who have tirelessly worked on bills 4806 through 4809, but also to testify to the members of this committee the importance of passing these bills as it relates to my experiences and others in my situation as juveniles sentenced to life without the possibility of parole.

Over the 17 plus years of my incarceration, I have worked hard to correct many of the thought patterns and behaviors that were not conducive to living as a productive member of society.

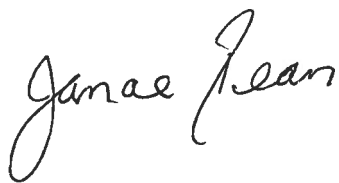
I have participated in and succeeded in all possible rehabilitative programs that MDOC permits for a lifer. I have also maintained steady employment over the years and worked hard to instill within myself the necessary tools that have prepared me and will allow me to excel as a reformed member of society.

I also volunteer as a Christian Worship leader, singing and playing guitar here in the chapel one Sunday per month. Additionally, I am enrolled in a ministerial program which is the equivalent of a college course, administrated by "Prison Fellowship" called TUMI (The Urban Ministry Institute) that teaches and trains willing prisoners to become ordained ministers behind bars. I married a wonderful Christian girl 3 1/2 years ago from the school I attended in the inner city of Grand Rapids. She is a great comfort and support to me. We have purchased a home and it is my hope that one day I will be able to be free and begin a family with her. I would want to teach my children to love and respect life and to serve the community where they live. I am confident that I cannot only be and remain a productive member of society, but a benefit to it. Birthed out of the years of remorse and anguish over all the lives I have so horribly affected, came a deep reverence and respect for life, Now I want to be a defender of it. It is my desire to speak to youth groups to help them understand how to avoid some of the dangers that I fell into as a teenager. I trust and pray that bills 4806 through 4809 pass because, I know in my heart from whence I have come, the

strides I have made to overcome the negatives in my life that once invaded me as a angry teenager and I'm sure there are other juvenile lifers who can say the same. I have dedicated the balance of my life to positive change, whether it's making it in my own, or preserving it for another. I am resolved to contribute to society all that I am, and all that I have to make it a better place to live and to be a model citizen for God, my family, my community, my state and my country.

Thank you for listening to me, and may God bless you as you seek to help the over 350 juveniles lifers incarcerated in the State of Michigan.

Sincerely,
Saulo Montalvo -253032

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janae Jean". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Saulo Montalvo".